MARVEL

4

ROSENBERG
GORHAM
GARLAND

THE NEW MUTANTS

DEAD SOULS

THE NEW MUTANTS

DEAD SOULS

BORN WITH AN X-GENE THAT GRANTS THEM WEIRD AND UNCANNY ABILITIES, MUTANTS ARE THOUGHT TO BE THE NEXT STEP IN HUMAN EVOLUTION. XI'AN COY MANH, A DISCIPLE OF THE MUTANT ACTIVIST CHARLES XAVIER, HAS ASSEMBLED A TEAM OF UNIQUELY QUALIFIED MUTANTS LED BY ILLYANA RASPUTIN (A.K.A. MAGIK) TO INVESTIGATE THESE WEIRD AND UNCANNY PHENOMENA. ILLYANA DISCOVERED THESE RECENT SUPERNATURAL OCCURRENCES WERE CONNECTED AND THAT XI'AN'S UNDEAD BROTHER TRAN WAS INVOLVED. BEFORE SHE COULD ACT ON THIS REVELATION, A PLANE TRAN HAD COMMANDEERED CRASHED INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE – WITH ILLYANA AND RICTOR STILL INSIDE!

MEANWHILE IN CONNECTICUT, THE TECHNO-ORGANIC EXTRATERRESTRIAL KNOWN AS WARLOCK, HIMSELF A FORMER ASSOCIATE OF XI'AN'S, WAS SEQUESTERED IN A REMOTE CABIN WHEN A GROUP OF KIDS ATTACKED HIM…

CHAPTER 4: ISOLATION

WRITER MATTHEW **ROSENBERG**

ARTIST ADAM **GORHAM**

COLOR ARTIST MICHAEL **GARLAND**

LETTERER VC's CLAYTON **COWLES**

MAIN COVER ARTISTS RYAN **STEGMAN** & MICHAEL **GARLAND**

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS ADAM **DEL RE** & ANTHONY **GAMBINO**

ASSISTANT EDITOR CHRIS **ROBINSON**

EDITOR DARREN **SHAN**

X-MEN GROUP EDITOR JORDAN D. **WHITE**

EDITOR IN CHIEF C.B. **CEBULSKI**

CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER JOE **QUESADA**

PRESIDENT DAN **BUCKLEY**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER ALAN **FINE**

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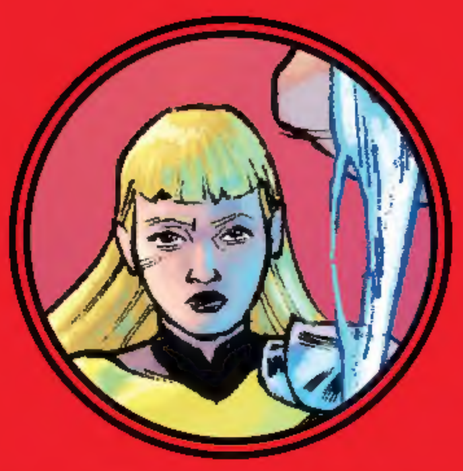

MAGIK
ILLYANA RASPUTIN

RICTOR
JULIO RICHTER

BOOM-BOOM
TABITHA SMITH

STRONG GUY
GUIDO CAROSELLA

WOLFSBANE
RAHNE SINCLAIR

SOMEWHERE IN NORTH CAROLINA.

RICTOR?! MAGIK?!

NO, NO, NO!

WHAT ARE YOU GUYS, LIKE, THE AVENGERS OR SOMETHING?

SOMETHING.

HEY, MAN, IT'S TOO HOT TO GO IN THERE! *HEY!*

AIN'T NOTHING COULD SURVIVE IN THERE.

JUST LET HIM GO.

SNIFF SNIFF

IS SHE... OKAY?

OH, FOR @#$% SAKE... RAHNEY! COME BACK!

RAHNE? WHAT THE--

I COULDN'T SAVE THEM.

I COULDN'T SAVE RICTOR.

PLEASE HELP ME.

XAVIER INSTITUTE.
CENTRAL PARK, MANHATTAN.

I GOT YOU.

I NEVER GET TO SEE YOU ALL DRESSED UP. SO FANCY.

THIS IS PSYLOCKE'S DRESS, KITTY. I...*BORROWED* IT.

WELL, IT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.

IT WOULD LOOK BETTER IF I WERE FIVE INCHES TALLER...AND A NINJA.

PSHH. YOU GIRLS WITH YOUR SWORDS CAN PRETTY MUCH PULL OFF ANYTHING IF YOU COMMIT.

WHOA! EASY ON THE EYELINER, MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE.

BE NICE! NOBODY EVER TAUGHT ME HOW TO DO THIS!

GIVE IT. NOW LOOK UP.

I WON'T, IF YOU LOOK UP.

DON'T POKE ME.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, KITTY.

I HATE THAT FUNERALS ALWAYS BRING US BACK TOGETHER.

REMEMBER WHEN WE WERE JUST TWO LITTLE IDIOTS RUNNING AROUND THESE HALLS, TRYING NOT TO GET IN TROUBLE?

I DID.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT ONE DAY THESE IDIOTS WOULD BE LEADING TEAMS?

YOU WERE THE BRAVEST, TOUGHEST, ***SCARIEST*** PERSON HERE. EVEN LOGAN WAS INTIMIDATED.

FROM THE FIRST TIME I MET YOU, I KNEW YOU'D BE A GREAT TEAM LEADER ONE DAY.

BUT I'M NOT.

I LOST A MEMBER OF MY TEAM, KITTY. I LET HIM DIE.

BUT YOU'RE STILL HERE FOR YOUR TEAM. WHEN OTHERS WOULD BE LONG GONE, YOU STAYED. YOU'RE HERE FOR THEM. THAT'S A LEADER.

I HATE ALL OF THIS. WHY ARE YOU SO MUCH BETTER AT THIS THAN ME?

I'M BETTER AT EVERYTHING THAN YOU.

HELLO. THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE. I KNOW IT WOULD MEAN A LOT TO RIC.

HE ALWAYS SAID, NO MATTER WHAT, WE ARE A *FAMILY* FIRST. AND IT'S NICE TO SEE HE WAS CORRECT.

PSSST... ILLYANA. SAVED YOU A SEAT.

'YANA?

JUST LET HER BE, DANI.

WHERE I COME FROM THERE IS AN EXPRESSION--THE ONLY PERSON WHO KNOWS YOU BETTER THAN YOUR FAMILY IS THE ONE WHO FIGHTS BY YOUR SIDE.

THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO ASK HIS FRIEND, FAMILY MEMBER, TEAM LEADER AND THE PERSON FIGHTING BESIDE HIM WHEN HE DIED IF SHE WOULD SAY SOMETHING.

ILLYANA?

THANK YOU, SHATTERSTAR.

SEEING ALL OF US GATHERED HERE...FOR RIC... JULIO...

IT'S OVERWHELMING. I...

...I THINK WHEN YOU AGREE TO LEAD A TEAM YOU HAVE ONE JOB ABOVE ALL ELSE.

JUST MAKE SURE EVERYONE MAKES IT HOME OKAY...

...

I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE. ANY OF IT. I'M SO SORRY.

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, LITTLE ONE.

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT A DRINK.

YOU FOUND ME.

GOT ONE.

EVER RESOURCEFUL, SISTER. HOW ARE YOU?

NOT IN THE MOOD FOR THIS, PIOTR.

THAT'S WHY IT IS IMPORTANT.

"IT'S SO MUCH DARKER WHEN A LIGHT GOES OUT THAN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IF IT HAD NEVER SHONE."

YOU'RE QUOTING STEINBECK AT ME?

I NEVER KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO YOU, SO I FOUND SOMEONE WHO DID. DO NOT BE ANGRY ABOUT THAT.

DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED?
WOULD YOU? I WANT TO HEAR THE STORY FROM YOU.
NOT REALLY.
WE WERE ON A PLANE. I KILLED THE PILOT. I COULDN'T GET TO RICTOR IN TIME. I TELEPORTED MYSELF OUT. IT WENT DOWN. THAT'S THE END OF RICTOR'S STORY.
MINE KEEPS GOING FOR SOME REASON.
WHAT WERE YOU DOING ON THE PLANE?
IT WAS A MISSION.
IT'S GOOD TO TALK, SISTER. EVEN WHEN IT HURTS. ESPECIALLY WHEN...
I JUST... I'M NOT THE STRONGEST X-MAN. OR THE FASTEST. OR SMARTEST.
THAT IS NOT HOW WE MEASURE OURSELVES.
OF COURSE IT IS.
WE CAN COLOR IT ANY WAY WE WANT, PUT IT IN A ***FANCY DRESS,*** BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY WE'RE SOLDIERS. RIGHT? I ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS THE ONE WHO KEPT THEIR HEAD WHEN %$#@ WENT WRONG.
BECAUSE ALL I'VE EVER KNOWN IS %$#@ GOING WRONG, PIOTR. SO I THOUGHT I WAS THE ONE YOU TRUST IN A CRISIS.
YOU ARE.
TELL THAT TO RICTOR.

ILLYANA! WAIT--

GET OFFA ME!

HE WAS MAH SON, GUIDO! MAH SON! HOW COULD YE?!

RAHNE, PLEASE!

BREAK IT UP! BOTH OF YOU!

I'M SORRY, RAHNEY! I'M SO SORRY...

GET HIM OUT OF HERE.

I'M SORRY.

YOU! WHAT WAS THAT?

YE DAMN WELL KNOW! HE KILLED MAH BOY!

HE WASN'T HIMSELF. YOU KNOW THAT, RAHNE. HE HAD LOST HIS SOUL!

AND YE WENT AN' GOT IT BACK FER HIM, DIN'TCHA? AND THEN... AND THEN YE PUT HIM ON A TEAM WITH ME?!

DON'T YA EVEN CARE ABOUT THAT? ABOUT ANY OF US?!

C'MON, RAHNE. *BEFORE* YOU SAY SOMETHING YOU REGRET.

NO WONDER YOU LET RICTOR DIE!

OR NOT.

HEAVY IS THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE CROWN, THEY SAY.

I'VE WORN CROWNS BEFORE. IT NEVER FELT LIKE THIS.

I'M SORRY, 'YANA. I KNOW NONE OF THIS IS EASY. YOU HANDLED *THAT* WELL, THOUGH. EVEN IF YOUR EARLIER SPEECH...LEFT SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED.

YEAH, WELL, YOU KNOW ME, DANI.

CAN YOU JUST ANSWER ME ONE QUESTION? I ASKED SHAN AND SHE GOT ALL WEIRD ON ME. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WERE DOING.

OF COURSE SHE DID.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IT'S HER BROTHER.

LEONG?

NO. THE OTHER ONE. *TRAN.*

HE'S DEAD, ILLYANA.

AND WHEN DID THINGS LIKE THAT EVER MATTER TO PEOPLE LIKE US?

YOU KNOW SHAN KILLED HIM YEARS AGO, RIGHT?

SHE ALWAYS SAID SHE HAD NO CHOICE. HE WAS EVIL.

I'M NOT SURE IT WORKS LIKE THAT, BUT GO ON...

AND YOU KNOW WHY SHE CHOSE THE CODENAME *KARMA?*

OF COURSE. THE DARKNESS AND THE LIGHT.

YES. THE YIN AND THE YANG. HIS SOUL HAS BEEN *TRAPPED* IN HER BODY.

I KNOW ALL THIS--

WELL, NOW HE ISN'T.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? HIS SOUL ESCAPED? HOW?

HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?

WELL, WHERE HAS HE BEEN?

SO FAR? THE HATCHI CORPORATION OFFICES IN HANOI. A HURRICANE RELIEF CENTER IN ALABAMA. A CEMETERY IN PARIS. AN ARCTIC RESEARCH FACILITY...

...AND THIS PLANE.

SO WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN?

I WAS GOING TO SEND HIM TO *LIMBO.*

THAT'S IT? YOU DIDN'T TRY TO TALK TO HIM? TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO HELP HIM GET HIS LIFE BACK OR WHATEVER HE WANTS?

RIGHT NOW IT SEEMS HE JUST WANTS TO HURT SHAN. HE ATTACKED HER COMPANY, HER TEAM, HER FRIENDS...EXCEPT YOU, ODDLY.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU'RE ONE OF SHAN'S CLOSEST FRIENDS. YOU'RE ALSO A VALKYRIE. WHO BETTER TO BE TRACKING THIS LOST SOUL THAN YOU?

AND?

WHERE WERE YOU, DANI?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ILLYANA?

WHY WEREN'T YOU WITH US? WHY WEREN'T *YOU* LEADING THE TEAM?

I'M SORRY, ILLYANA. I KNOW THAT YOU FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO RIC AND--

I *AM* RESPONSIBLE. WHERE WERE YOU?

ALL THAT MATTERS IS I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU NOW. I WANTED TO KNOW--

WHAT OUR PLANS WERE. FUNNY THAT YOU CARE SO MUCH *NOW*, NO?

HEY, SUGAH, YOU'RE CAUSING A BIT OF A SCENE AGAIN...

A SCENE? NO...

...*THIS* IS A SCENE.

I WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! IT'S DANI!

SHE'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE!

OF COURSE SHE IS. SHE'S ONE OF US!

I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU WENT, DANI.

BUT I KNOW YOU AREN'T HERE FOR ME NOW.

YOU'RE VERY IMPRESSIVE, ILLYANA.

NO.

I SEE WHY MY SISTER PICKED YOU TO TRY AND CATCH ME. THANK YOU FOR THE INSIGHTS INTO YOUR PLAN.

I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I NEED YOU DEAD NOW.

GOOD NEWS! THE PASSENGERS ALL JUST SNAPPED OUT OF IT. DID YOU DO...

HOLY @&#$. MAGIK, DID YOU KILL THE $#%#&@ PILOT?!

RICTOR! I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE NOT DEAD.

UMMM, YEAH...ME, TOO. BUT WHY ARE YOU TOUCHING ME?

WE'RE GONNA CRASH! FIX THIS!
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FLY A PLANE!
HOW HARD CAN IT BE?
SO YOU DO IT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FLY A PLANE!
AHHHH... IT'S NOT... WORKING...
IF YOU GOT SOME...TRICK UP YOUR SLEEVE... NOW'D BE A REAL GOOD...
STRIKE

NINE DAYS LATER.

THIS IS OUR THIRD TIME THROUGH THIS GRID, SHAN.

I APPRECIATE YOUR PERSEVERANCE, BUT IT'S BEEN MORE THAN A WEEK. IT MIGHT BE TIME TO BE REALISTIC AND SAY--

MA'AM?

WE'RE GETTING A REPORT THAT THERE IS A DOWNED AIRCRAFT AROUND 35 MILES NORTH OF HERE, IN THE WATER.

DIVERS FOUND IT?

NO, MA'AM. THEY SAY IT *JUST* CRASHED DOWN A FEW MINUTES AGO.

HATCHI

IT'S THEM! HOW IS THIS--

"MAGIK'S POWERS DON'T ALWAYS WORK LINEARLY. SHE MUST HAVE TELEPORTED THEM THROUGH SPACE *AND* TIME."

I ASSUME THIS MEANS YOU WANT ME TO TELL THE ***SECOND TEAM*** TO STAND DOWN?

NO. KEEP THEM ON STANDBY. I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS FOR OUR DEAR MS. RASPUTIN.

CANTERBURY, CONNECTICUT.

WE MESSED HIM UP GOOD!

WHY DO THIS, SELFSTRANGER?

HA! HE LIKES YOU, CHRISTIAN.

YEAH, WELL, I DON'T LIKE HIM!

WHY DO YOU HARM/DAMAGE WARLOCK?

HEY! LEMME GO, FREAK!

WARLOCK/SELF DID NO TRANSGRESSIONS TO SELFSTRANGER.

LEMME GO...

PLEASE...

LET ME GO!

WARLOCK IS SORRY--

SHATTERSTAR

TO BE CONTINUED...

ZONE